

# *Capparis batianoffii* Guym (Capparaceae), a new species from central coastal Queensland

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## Summary

Guym, G.P. (2008). *Capparis batianoffii* Guym (Capparaceae), a new species from central coastal Queensland. *Austrobaileya* 7(4): 723–725 (2008). The new species *Capparis batianoffii* (*Capparis* section *Monstichiocalyx* Radlk.) is described and illustrated, together with information on its distribution, habitat and conservation status.

Key Words: *Capparis batianoffii*, Capparaceae, Queensland flora, Australian flora, new species

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## Introduction

An undescribed species of *Capparis* L. belonging to *C.* section *Monstichiocalyx* Radlk. has been recognised to occur on Gloucester Island, central coastal Queensland, since it was first discovered by George Batianoff in 1992. Further collections of this species were made by Batianoff in 1994. It has been referred to as *Capparis* sp. (Gloucester Island G.N. Batianoff 920912) at the Queensland Herbarium (Jessup 2007).

## Materials and methods

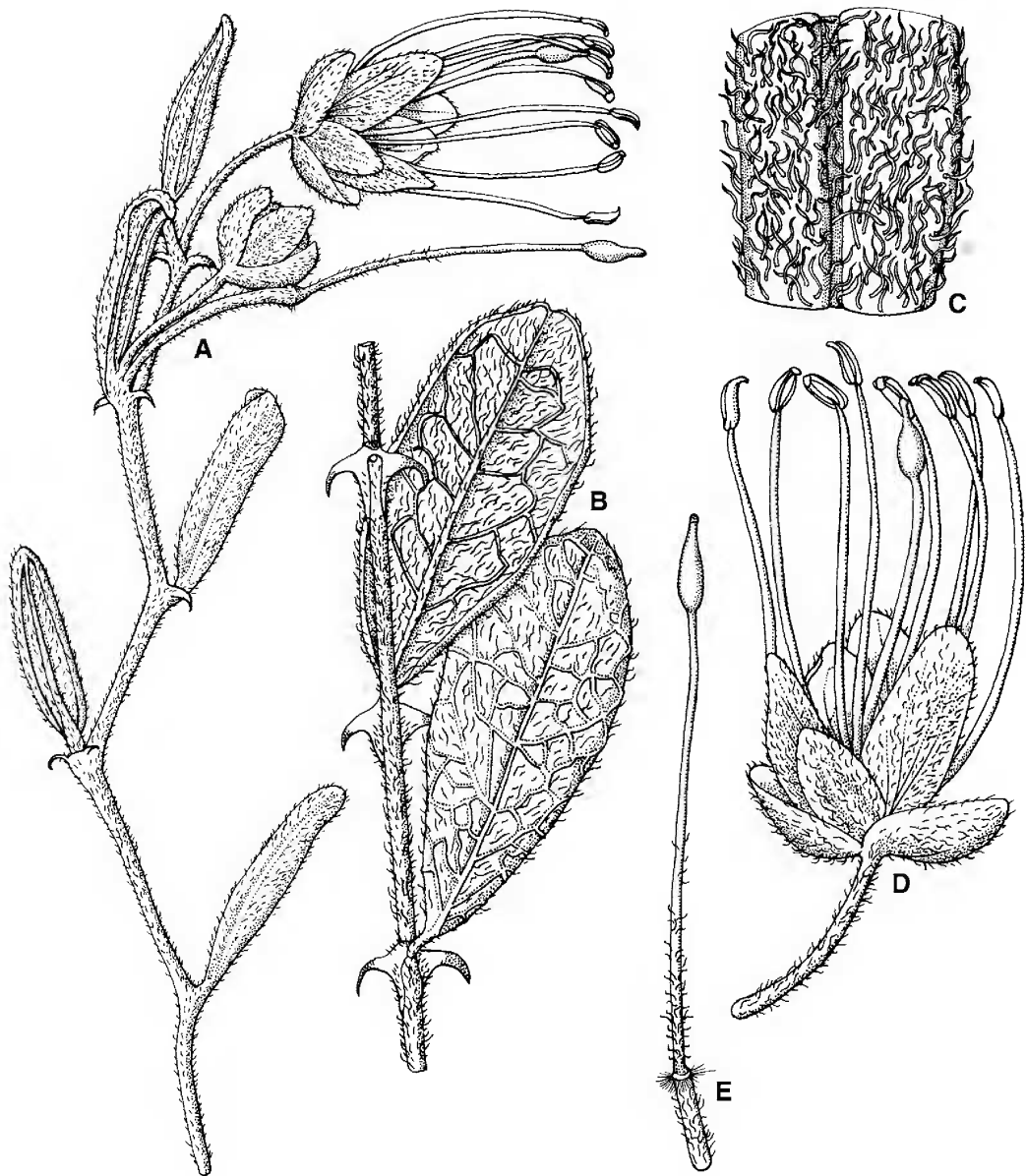
The paper is based on specimens held at the Queensland Herbarium (BRI). The terminology for *Capparis* follows that used by Jacobs (1965). Measurements of the flowers are based on dried or reconstituted material.

## Taxonomy

***Capparis batianoffii*** Guym, **species nova** affinis *C. sarmentoso* Cunn. ex Benth. sed ab ea staminibus 8 (adversum 19–22) et foliis, sepalis, petalis et gynophoris pubescentibus (non glabellis vel glabrescentibus) differt. **Typus:** Queensland. NORTH KENNEDY DISTRICT: Gloucester Island, East coast, 5 km N of Chinaman's Rock, 1 September 1992, G.N. Batianoff 920912 (holo: BRI; iso: BRI, K, MEL distribuendi).

*Capparis* sp. (Gloucester Island G.N. Batianoff 920912) (Jessup 2007)

Climbing scrambling shrubs to 6 m, branches pendulous. Stipular spines present, acicular, 2–3 mm long, recurved, cream or brown, pubescent with upper half glabrous. Branchlets pubescent with sandy or pale brown contorted simple hairs. Leaves distichous; lamina ovate, obovate, ovate-lanceolate or lanceolate, 10–20 × 3.5–7 mm; apices obtuse, rounded or retuse, with a small mucro to 1 mm long; bases cuneate; pubescent above (mid-dense) and below with sandy or pale brown simple contorted hairs (0.1–) 0.2–0.75 mm long; margins slightly recurved; lateral veins 5–7 pairs; venation slightly raised above and below, midrib sunken above, raised below; petioles pubescent, 1–1.5 mm long. Inflorescence axillary, solitary or a collateral pair; pedicels 9–10 mm long, with sandy or pale brown simple hairs. Flowers white, aromatic, buds globose. Sepals 4; outer two cymbiform, 5.6–7 × 4–4.5 mm, inner two ovate, 4.8–5.5 × 3.5–4 mm, densely pubescent outside with sandy or pale brown simple hairs 0.3–0.7 mm long, glabrous inside. Petals 4; obovate, 10–11 × 3.5–4 mm, pubescent outside with sandy or pale brown simple hairs 0.3–0.7 mm long, glabrous inside. Stamens 8; anthers 2.8–3.3 × 1.2–1.4 mm; filaments filiform, 18–20 mm long, glabrous. Gynophore filiform, 17–18 × 0.2–0.3 mm diameter, glabrous above the middle, pubescent below with sandy or pale brown simple hairs 0.3–0.6 mm long. Ovary ovoid, 2.8–3.3 × 1.2–1.3 mm, smooth, glabrous; style 1–1.2 mm long; stigma globular, c. 0.5 mm diameter; placentas 4, ovules 16–26, in 2 rows. Berry not seen. **Fig. 1.**



**Fig. 1.** *Capparis batianoffii*. A. flowering branchlet  $\times 2$ . B. leaves  $\times 4$ . C. adaxial leaf surface  $\times 12$ . D. flower  $\times 3$ . F. gynophore and ovary  $\times 4$ . All from *Batianoff 920912* (BRI). Del. W. Smith.

**Additional specimens examined:** **Queensland.** NORTH KENNEDY DISTRICT [all Gloucester Island]: E coast, site 28, April 1994, *Batianoff 940401Z* & *Figg* (BRI); E side bay, site 16, April 1994, *Batianoff 940446* & *Figg* (BRI).

**Distribution and habitat:** *Capparis batianoffii* is known only from Gloucester Island, off the central coast of Queensland

from three locations and six individual plants (*Batianoff et al.* 1997). It occurs in Araucarian vine thickets (Regional ecosystem 8.12.11) on slopes amongst granitic boulders from near sea-level to 400 m.

**Notes:** *Capparis batianoffii* appears to be allied to *C. sarmentosa* but differs from this

species by its fewer stamens (8 *cf.* 19–22) and its pubescent leaves, sepals, petals and gynophores.

*Capparis batianoffii* will key to *Capparis quiniflora* DC. in *Flora of Australia* (Hewson 1984) but it is readily distinguished from this species by its much smaller leaf blades (10–20 mm *cf.* 55–120 mm) and petioles (1–1.5 mm *cf.* 5–17 mm), and inflorescences (single or collateral pair *cf.* 2–10-flowered racemes).

**Conservation status:** *Capparis batianoffii* is known to occur only on Gloucester Island. The island of 2,960 hectares is part of the Gloucester Islands National Park and lies within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. The species is known from three locations on the Island with a known area of occupancy of less than 20 km<sup>2</sup>. Batianoff *et al.* (1997) reported six individual plants from these three locations. The species is threatened from chance stochastic events (e.g. drought, fire) and its conservation status is assessed as vulnerable based on criterion D (it has an area of occupancy of less than 20km and fewer than 1000 mature individuals) (IUCN 2001).

**Etymology:** Named for George Nicholas Batianoff, Principal Botanist, Queensland Herbarium, who discovered and made the first collections of this species and who has published extensively on the vegetation of coastal Queensland.

### Acknowledgements

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